

Central Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



please ask for Jonathon Partridge

direct line 0300 300 4634

date 23 May 2013

NOTICE OF MEETING

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 4 June 2013 10.00 a.m.

Venue at

Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs Mrs A Barker (Chairman), N B Costin (Vice-Chairman), R D Berry, D Bowater, Mrs S Clark, Mrs G Clarke, A L Dodwell, Mrs R J Drinkwater, Mrs S A Goodchild, Mrs D B Gurney, P Hollick, D Jones, R B Pepworth and M A G Versallion

[Named Substitutes:

P N Aldis, K Janes, B Saunders, A Shadbolt and N J Sheppard]

Co-optees: Mr Court (Parent Governor), Ms Copley (Parent Governor), Ms Image (Roman Catholic Diocese), Mr Landman (Parent Governor) and Mr Reynolds (Church of England Diocese)

All other Members of the Council - on request

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS
MEETING**

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members.

2. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest and of any political whip in relation to any agenda item.

3. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 April 2013 and to note actions taken since that meeting.

4. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman and any matters of communication.

5. **Petitions**

To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements or deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of part A4 of the Constitution.

7. **Call-In**

To consider any decision of the Executive referred to this Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

8. **Requested Items**

To consider any items referred to the Committee at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

Reports

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
9	Executive Member Update To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	* verbal
10	Early Help Offer To consider a report on the early help offer to families.	* 15 - 20
11	Update on Children's Health Provision To receive an update on Children's Health Provision in Central Bedfordshire.	* verbal
12	Policy Change for Children's Social Care To receive a presentation on the outcome of the recent policy change for Children's social care.	* verbal
13	Equality and Diversity Strategy To receive the Equality and Diversity Strategy prior to public consultation.	* 21 - 56
14	Work Programme 2013 - 2014 & Executive Forward Plan To consider the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.	* 57 - 86

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 23 April 2013

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs A Barker (Chairman)

Councillors:	R D Berry D Bowater Mrs G Clarke	Councillors:	Mrs R J Drinkwater P Hollick D Jones
Parental Co-optees:	H Copley Mr S Court D Landman		
Church of England Co-optee:	J Reynolds		
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	N B Costin Mrs D B Gurney Mrs F Image R B Pepworth	
Substitutes:	Cllrs	P N Aldis (In place of R B Pepworth)	
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	Mrs S Clark A L Dodwell Mrs S A Goodchild M A G Versallion	Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services Executive Member for Children's Services
Officers in Attendance:	Mrs E Grant Mr R Parsons Mr J Partridge Miss H Redding		Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning Scrutiny Policy Adviser Head of Learning and School Support

CS/13/1 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 February 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CS/13/2 **Members' Interests**

Cllr Bowater declared an interest in item 9 as the Chairman of the Board of Governors at Gilbert Inglefield Academy.

CS/13/3 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs Gurney as previous Chairman and the previous Membership of the Committee for their work during 2012-13. The Chairman also welcomed the Parent Governor and Diocesan Representatives to the meeting and explained voting rights for committee members.

CS/13/4 **Petitions**

No petitions were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part D2 of the Constitution.

CS/13/5 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

No questions, statements or deputations were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CS/13/6 **Call-In**

The Panel was advised that no decisions of the Executive had been referred to the Panel under the Call-in Procedures set out in Appendix "A" to Rule No. S18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

CS/13/7 **Requested Items**

No items were referred to the Committee for consideration at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

CS/13/8 **Executive Member Update**

The Executive Member for Children's Services provided the Committee with an update on current activities pertaining to his portfolio, which were not already included on the agenda. This covered the following:-

- Congratulations to staff for an award the Council recently won for its campaign to recruit children's Social Workers.
- The Council's performance relating to enabling pupils to attend their first school choice, which was very positive.

- An increase of £22 million in capital funding that the Council had received from the Department for Education.
- A recent conference he had attended regarding extending free provision for pre-school education to two year olds.
- A public meeting regarding changes in the schools system in Dunstable that was taking place at the fire station in Dunstable on Monday 29 April to which all Members were invited.

Members of the Committee asked several questions to which the Executive Member responded as follows:-

- A 'live' picture of school age ranges was presently available on the Council's website.
- There was no formal requirement regarding the use of the term 'Looked After Children' or 'Children Looked After'.
- Two upper schools in Central Bedfordshire were in the process of converting to academy status, if they convert all of the upper schools in Central Bedfordshire would be academies.
- The increased number of pupils attending schools in Leighton Buzzard resulted from school's changes of age range. Some additional funding would be available to these schools as a result of the increase in pupil numbers.

CS/13/9

Commissioning New School Places for Implementation from September 2015

The Executive Member introduced this report, which outlined seven projects within the New School Places Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 where local pressures of demographic growth required new school places to be provided from September 2015. The projects represented £21.8m of expenditure and the Executive Member drew attention to the £1m that the Council may be required to provide from its own resources in 2015/16. He also drew attention to an amendment to the report regarding the BEMAT Key Stage 4 results contained in Appendix B to the Executive report of 14 May.

The Executive Member drew particular attention to recommendation six of the Executive report, which referred to proposals for a detailed capital business case and proposals of Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust.

Members of the Committee discussed the content of the report in detail and raised the following issues:-

- The purpose of schools preparing a detailed business case for new school places. The Executive Member commented that if a school was keen to expand they should be encouraged to work up a business case themselves with the Council acting as a critical friend.
- The tipping point between expanding a school and providing a new one. The Executive Member confirmed that all schools were governed by nine policy principles set by the Council, Expanding schools had to demonstrate they could still deliver these principles. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented on the importance of the business case in order to determine whether the school could still deliver the Council's principles.

- Whether the lack of S106 funding would have an impact on proposals for new school places. The Executive Member confirmed that the Council would receive a significant contribution through S106 but there were other schemes through which funding could also be obtained.
- The difficulty of communicating to schools and Parish Councils the implications of growth and new housing. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services suggested that a workshop could possibly be arranged for Parish Councils to provide information on school places as part of their already established meetings. The Head of School Organisation, Admissions and Capital Planning also advised the Committee that work was undertaken with housing colleagues and others to provide an accurate picture of growth that informed the annual School Organisation Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee endorses the proposals outlined within the report for consideration by the Executive.

CS/13/10

Elective Home Education

The Head of Special Education Needs and Inclusion delivered a presentation, which provided the Committee with a summary of practice relating to Elective Home Education (EHE) in Central Bedfordshire. In addition to defining EHE the presentation provided further detail on the numbers of pupils in Central Bedfordshire known to be home educated; the role of the local authority; and practice in Central Bedfordshire.

Members of the Committee raised several questions following the presentation relating to the following:-

- Whether we should encourage every child to attend school. The Head of Special Education Needs and Inclusion informed the Committee that many parents opt for home education as they felt school was not appropriate for their child. In some cases this was the result of a breakdown in communication with a school. The Council attempted to solve issues where possible but parents had a right to choose to educate their child at home.
- Guidelines and support that were available for families. The Head of Special Education Needs and Inclusion confirmed that support was available for parents through the Council's Access and Improvement Service as well as other national organisations. There were further local activities available for children who were educated at home to develop a gift or talent.
- Advice on what constituted a "suitable education". The Head of Special Education Needs and Inclusion stated that a suitable education was one that allowed a person to lead the life that they wanted, both at school age and beyond school age.
- Whether the Council provided home tuition. The Head of Special Education Needs and Inclusion confirmed that the Council did provide home tuition to pupils that were unable to attend school for medical reasons. The Council had also participated in flexi-schooling where a

pupil was on the roll of a school but also received support from elsewhere.

- Concerns regarding the protection of children that were home educated. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services stated that any concerns regarding child protection must be reported directly to the Council's published child protection numbers so that an appropriate assessment could be undertaken.
- Whether an assessment was made of a parent's ability to provide home education. The Head of Special Education Needs and Inclusion stated that parents were only required to provide evidence of delivering a suitable education.
- The numbers of pupils of Gypsy or Traveller ethnicity that were home educated. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented on the importance of all groups of pupils who were home educated receiving a good education. It was proposed that this matter be referred to the Children's Trust to consider whether there was appropriate education provision for minority communities in Central Bedfordshire.

RECOMMENDED

That the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services be asked to discuss with the Children's Trust whether there was appropriate education provision for minority communities in Central Bedfordshire.

CS/13/11

Review of the Children and Young People's Plan

The Executive Member introduced a report, which set out the position reached on the development of the revised Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan (2013/15). The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that the Plan was not mandatory but the Council and Children's Trust had agreed that it was important for other organisations who also relied on it. The development of the Plan was an iterative process and an amended version of the Plan was circulated at the meeting with attention drawn to the following:-

- Changes in terminology such as removing reference to "key actions";
- Balancing the focus on education and child protection;
- Stressing the importance of addressing domestic abuse;
- Ensuring a focus on sufficient foster carers in Central Bedfordshire for looked after children rather than relying on external placements.

In addition the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented that there may be further changes to the draft Plan prior to its presentation to Executive. A further copy would be circulated to Members of the OSC prior to Executive so that they could comment further. Members of the Committee discussed the content of the report in detail and raised the following issues and comments:-

- The vision contained in the draft plan should refer "we want every child to do well in education (...)", it should not refer just to those in school.
- The Council should be congratulated for reducing the number of teenage conceptions.

- The need to understand why there were different outcomes at the Bedford Hospital Trust and Luton & Dunstable Hospital in relation to the percentage of mothers initiating breastfeeding. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Board be asked to consider this issue, which was supported by the Committee.
- The Plan should refer to specific dates for the period that it relates to.

The Committee discussed in detail concerns relating to incidents of domestic violence and the local approach for addressing these issues. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented there were issues in relation to the efficiency and outcomes with which domestic violence was presently dealt with. It was proposed that the Committee add an item to their work programme in 12 months to consider the most effective approach for addressing these issues. In addition the Executive Member informed the Committee that work was presently underway in relation to performance on domestic abuse and domestic violence but it would take time to respond to these issues. The Committee agreed to add this item to their work programme for a future meeting.

RECOMMENDED

That the Committee note the progress made on the review of the Children and Young People's Plan and request that the comments contained in Minutes be considered as part of the review of the Plan.

CS/13/12 **Quarter 3 Performance Report**

The Executive Member presented the Quarter 3 Performance report, which highlighted performance within the Children's Services directorate for the third quarter of 2012/13. The Executive Member drew attention to the mixed performance related to achieving five or more A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths, which had been affected by a failed judicial review of the results.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be noted.

CS/13/13 **Revenue Budget Management Report Quarter 3 ended 30 December 2012**

The Executive Member presented this report, which set out the revenue position of the Children's Services Directorate to the end of December 2012 (the third quarter of 2012/13). He further explained that the underspend against the full year projected revenue outturn position for 2012/13 had reduced.

In response to a question the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services advised that the Sustainable Communities directorate was undertaking work in relation to identifying the ways to deliver the next tranche of savings regarding SEN transport. Progress had been made in relation to

delivering savings but additional pressures had arisen as a result of complex needs, transport for gypsies and travellers, and school places becoming filled.

Members of the Committee were content with the budgetary position outlined and noted the report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be noted.

CS/13/14 **Capital Budget Management Report Quarter 3 ended 30 December 2012**

The Executive Member presented this report, which set out the capital position of the Children's Services Directorate to the end of December 2012 (the third quarter of 2012/13).

Members of the Committee were content with the budgetary position outlined and noted the report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be noted.

CS/13/15 **Ofsted Action Plan and Review of Services for Looked after Children**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services delivered a presentation, which provided the Committee with an Ofsted Action Plan "close down" and the outcomes of a review of services for Looked After Children (LAC). The presentation covered several areas including:-

- Quality of practice and care planning for LAC;
- Quality Assurance and performance management;
- Educational support to LAC;
- Health arrangements for LAC/Leaving Care;
- Recommendations to Members – Next Steps.

In addition to the presentation the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services offered to provide Members with a quick briefing on the Ofsted inspection process.

Following the presentation Members of the Committee raised several questions, which related to the following:-

- The take up rate in Central Bedfordshire for MMR injections. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services agreed to look into this and respond to the parent governor outside of the meeting.
- The speed of the progressing cases through court. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that delays were caused both by the courts and the Council. It was important that the Council acted efficiently before seeking to address concerns regarding the speed of the court process. She was looking at this urgently.

- Further clarification regards performance relating to adoption. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services confirmed that performance related to the number of cases which would have been met within timescale and lead to adoption (6.5%).
- Performance in relation to the number of people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), which the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented was poor in relation to comparators. Action to address this was currently under consideration.

During the presentation the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services referred to three items that the Committee may like to consider at some point in the future. These were:-

1. Poor performance on LAC adoption;
2. The percentage of care leavers at age 19 who were engaged in education, training or employment;
3. Health arrangements for LAC/Leaving Care.

In addition to these three items it was proposed that fixed period exclusions also be considered at some point in the future. During discussion of these items the Executive Member commented on the role of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the importance of not duplicating effort. Members agreed that these issues were important and requested that the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services and the Executive Member consider where it was more appropriate to handle these items and whether to invite Members to attend a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel or for a report to be presented to the OSC so as to minimise duplication. Should it be appropriate for the items to be considered by the OSC they should be added to a relevant future agenda.

RECOMMENDATION

That the presentation be noted and that the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services bring forward presentations on those items outlined above in the most appropriate way to minimise duplication.

CS/13/16

Work Programme 2013 - 2014 & Executive Forward Plan

The Committee considered its current work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan and were content with the agenda items proposed for consideration at forthcoming meetings subject to the following amendments:-

- The Meeting date for 02 June be amended to read 04 June 2013 and the Meeting date for 11 December be amended to read 13 December 2013.
- The addition of the Equality and Diversity Strategy on the work programme for 04 June 2013.
- Issues relating to children with special needs also be considered at the meeting on 23 July 2013 under the report titled "Looked After Children – Supporting transition to adulthood".

- The addition of the close down of the actions from the Disability Review to the meeting on 15 October 2013.

The Committee also requested that the Minutes reflect their thanks to Bernard Carter, Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Manager, for his support of the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children’s Services OSC work programme be noted subject to the amendments outlined above.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.16 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 4 June 2013
Subject: Early Help Offer
Report of: Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services
Summary: The report requests that the Committee comment on the Early Help Offer to families in Central Bedfordshire Council as revised and updated.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Sue Tyler, Acting Assistant Director/Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Early Help Offer supports

- Improved educational attainment.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.

Financial:

1. The publication of a revised and updated Early Help Offer has no financial implications

Legal:

2. The publication of a revised and updated Early Help Offer has no legal implications

Risk Management:

3. Not applicable

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Not Applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. The publication of the revised and updated Early Help Offer has no new Equality or Human Rights issues attached.

Public Health

6. The publication of the revised and updated Early Help Offer has no new Public Health issues attached.

Community Safety:

7. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

8. Not applicable.

Procurement:

9. Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Comment on the publication of the Council's Early Help Offer, revised and updated in light of publication of "Working Together to safeguard children Guidance 2013".**

Background

10. An Early Intervention Framework has been in operation in Central Bedfordshire since October 2011.
11. The April 2012 Ofsted Framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children states: Child protection does not begin at the point of referral to children's social care. Early identification and early help are firmly within the scope of the inspection of child protection services. A key part of the inspection framework will be considering the effectiveness of these services in identifying children and young people who may be at risk, and the degree to which agencies work together to identify problems and offer effective help early, without the need for a formal referral to social care.
12. Following the publication of the Early Help officer document, the national "Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance March 2013" has been revised to bring it into line with the new emphasis on Early Help, the concept of which was used extensively in the Munro Report on improving social work first published in 2011.
13. Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance March 2013 states: Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation through to teenage years.

The Offer

14. The Council's "Early Help Offer" is entitled "Early Help for all who need it".
15. The document outlines the commitment to Early Help for all Children, Young people and their families, which supports the four priority areas of Improved Educational Attainment, Protecting Vulnerable Children, Early Help and Improving Life Chances and Being Healthy and Positive.
16. It goes on to outline how professionals can identify the children and families who would benefit from early help, and then how services can be accessed.
17. The Early Help offer is outlined through key service areas. The use of evidenced based approaches and programmes is also discussed.

18. A more detailed list of support is then outlined, however this should not be treated as a definitive list, as available services change in response to the identified needs of families.
19. The Practitioner Guidelines for accessing Early Help are then included. This contains a pre-assessment checklist, and detailed guidance on completing the Early Help (CAF) Form, the role of the Lead Professional and the Team around the Child, along with a flowchart, as well as the actual Assessment Form.
20. The final part of the offer involves the “Step Up and Step Down Process” as families access the system and Guidance for additional support when a case is being closed to Social Care or needs to be referred to Social Care for more intensive support. This is also being amended to include Stepping Down from the Troubled Families Programme.
21. The Early Help Offer which comprises a full list of provision, application forms, telephone contacts list etc., is on the Central Bedfordshire website, in both the Families and Professionals sections. The link to the entries on the website are <http://centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/support-for-professionals/common-assessment-framework.aspx> and <http://centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/support-for-families/default.aspx>
22. Extracts from the guidance relevant to the Council’s policy are attached at Appendix A for Members to comment on.

Appendix A: Extracts from Guidance

Background Papers: (open to public inspection) - Nil

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Appendix A

Extracts from Central Bedfordshire Early Help Offer

'For children who need additional help, every day matters. Academic research is consistent in underlining the damage to children from delaying intervention. The actions taken by professionals to meet the needs of these children as early as possible can be critical to their future'

Early help supports the broader council priorities of promoting health and well being and protecting the vulnerable and additionally offering value for money by working preventatively to reduce future spend within specialist services.

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to teenage years.

The new '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' guidance places an emphasis on the importance of early help in promoting the welfare of children, together with clear arrangements for collaboration, and we want to ensure that our early help offer reflects the ambitions of this guidance.

Our offer takes into account key messages from Munro's review:

- preventative services will do more to reduce abuse and neglect than reactive services
- co-ordination of services is important to maximise efficiency
- within preventative services, there needs to be good mechanisms for helping people identify those children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer harm from abuse and neglect and who need referral to children's social care

Central to our early help offer is the early identification of children and families who would benefit from early help and a co-ordinated early assessment and response to prevent abuse and neglect of children and young people, and improve outcomes for children and families as a whole.

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation through to teenage years.

Our early help offer therefore puts the responsibility on all professionals to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and families, irrespective of the whether they are providing services to children or adults. The professionals working mainly in universal services are best placed to identify children or their families, who are at risk of poor outcomes. These will be in health services, such as health visitors, GPs and school nurses, or in Children's Centres, or in education provision at any age from early years onwards.

'Working together' recommends that professionals should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence and / or
- is showing early signs of abuse and / or neglect and / or sexual exploitation

Early help services are also integral to cases stepping down out of Children's Social Care services, and Troubled Families Support, to enable a lower level of help to be offered to reduce future need for high level support and statutory intervention.

The provision of early help services should form part of a continuum of help and support to respond to the different levels of need of individual children and families.

Early help services work with families where there are signs that without support a child may not achieve good outcomes and fulfil their potential. However early help services are also critical in preventing escalation into specialist services, and will also assist with continuing lower level support once a higher level intervention has been completed (for example a Child in Need plan or a Troubled Families intervention).

Local agencies should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services.

To ensure that the best possible support is provided to children and families there needs to be an early assessment of need considering child's developmental needs, family and environmental factors and parenting capacity. To ensure that the best possible support is provided to children and families there needs to be an early assessment of need considering child's developmental needs, family and environmental factors and parenting capacity.

Working Together states that in order for an early assessment to be effective:

- the assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents / carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them
- if parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary

Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 04 June 2012
Subject: Central Bedfordshire Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy 2013 - 16
Report of: Cllr Jones , Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report proposes to update the Committee on progress in reviewing the Council's draft Equality and Diversity Strategy and to provide an early opportunity to comment on the content of the Strategy prior to the commencement of public consultation. A presentation will be delivered at the meeting to highlight how a focus on equality and diversity can support the achievement of council priorities.

Advising Officer: Deb Clarke Director of Improvement & Corporate Services
Contact Officer: Clare Harding Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality & Diversity)
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

1. Tackling inequality cuts across every activity of the Council and relates directly to the achievement of the Council's priorities:
 - Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
 - Improved educational attainment.
 - Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
 - Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.
 - Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
 - Value for money – freezing council tax.

Financial:

2. The proposals contained within this report will be met within existing budgets. A focus on equality and diversity helps to ensure that the resources invested in public services actually benefit all those they are aimed at or who need them.

Legal:

3. The current equality legislation the council is required to comply with is covered by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011.

Risk Management:

4. Failure to comply with equality legislation can expose the Council to the risk of costly litigation and also enforcement action by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. By adopting a variety of fair working practices the Council is more likely to attract and retain a broader pool of talented staff. Diversity of experience and ideas is more likely to lead to the identification of innovative solutions and effective service delivery.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. The draft Strategy demonstrates the Council's awareness of how promoting equality and diversity can be key to understanding and meeting residents' needs and increasing employee satisfaction.

Public Health

7. Tackling inequality across the broad range of council functions helps support the attainment of public health objectives.

Community Safety:

8. Tackling inequality across the broad range of council functions helps support the attainment of community safety objectives.

Sustainability:

9. Issues such as economic development, sustainable communities, quality of life and community cohesion are all factors which can be influenced by an individual's experience of inequality and discrimination.

Procurement:

10. Public bodies must ensure that when public services or functions are contracted out that the needs of residents continue to be understood and fully met and that employment practices are fair.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Committee is asked to:-

1. **Consider and comment on the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan attached at Appendix A**

Purpose of Report:

11. The report proposes to update the Committee on progress in reviewing the Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy and to provide an early opportunity to comment on the content of the Strategy prior to the commencement of public consultation.

Background Information:

12. The Equality Act applies to public and private sector bodies and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act.
13. Focusing on equality and diversity can help ensure that service and employment opportunities are available to all sections of society, in relation to the following protected characteristics, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
14. The Public Sector Equality Duty supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies proactively consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.
15. The Council is keen to ensure that it continues to adopt a good practice and robust approach to equality issues across all its activities and believes that this can best be achieved through the continued implementation, review and inclusion of an Equality Strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework.
16. The Draft Strategy sets out the progress that has been made to date across the Council and ongoing actions for the future can be found in Appendix 1 of the strategy.

Objectives and Actions

17. The Council has identified four corporate, overarching objectives and activities which are essential to ensuring that consideration of equality remains embedded across all Council activities.
 - Strong Leadership (Championing Equality in our Area and Identifying and Monitoring Equality Objectives)
 - Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups
 - The Fair Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce
 - Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion

Conclusion and Next Steps

18. Central Bedfordshire Council has made good progress in advancing Equality and Diversity. The approval and publication of the draft Strategy 2013 -16 will help ensure that this progress is maintained and further developed.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy 2013 -16

Background papers and their location: None

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Appendix **A**

Central Bedfordshire Equality & Diversity Strategy 2013 -16

Foreword

Promoting equality of opportunity is all about making life better for all our residents, especially the most vulnerable people living in our communities, such as older or disabled people, carers, people with low levels of literacy, people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage or people living in the most rural parts of Central Bedfordshire.

It's about ensuring that everything we do in local government is accessible to everyone, no matter what their life experience or situation is. It requires us to recognize that different people experience the same situation differently and that we must remove the barriers which can stop people accessing the services and employment opportunities they need.

This Equality & Diversity Strategy demonstrates our commitment as community leaders, service providers and as an employer to ensuring that equality and diversity is at the heart of all that we do, for local people, our employees, our partners, and the community at large. The Strategy sets out our overall approach, audits our progress over the last four years and includes our objectives and plan of action for the next three years (2013 - 16).

The Strategy demonstrates how we will ensure our services reflect fairness and equality. The action plan focuses on key themes which form the foundation of all our service areas. This plan has been driven by a comprehensive consultation with our key stakeholders, both internally and externally. The plan reflects our statutory duties, and also our corporate commitment to improving our services and work place practices.

We will monitor and review our performance annually, to ensure we achieve all the objectives set out in this scheme.

Councillor Maurice Jones

Deputy Leader and Executive Member, Corporate Resources

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1) Context - The Nature of Diversity in Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire is a unitary authority serving a growing population of around 255,000. It is a largely rural area with over half the population living in the countryside and the rest in a number of market towns. The largest of these are Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Biggleswade, Flitwick, Sandy and Ampthill.

The area is generally prosperous, with above average levels of employment. This could mask the few areas where we do have pockets of deprivation and, greater need (some households in Dunstable and Houghton Regis for example).

The area has excellent transport links with the A1 and M1 running through it, three main rail lines and two international airports, Luton and Stansted, on the doorstep. It is in the centre of an academic 'golden triangle' between Oxford, Cambridge and London Universities and also benefits from its own academic institutions at Cranfield University, the University of Bedfordshire and other further education colleges.

It is a great place to live and work. It is a relatively safe, green and affluent area which has attracted major investment. People living in Central Bedfordshire earn more than the national average; this is in part influenced by some residents commuting out of the area – primarily to London, Luton, Milton Keynes and Hertfordshire.

Age: In 2011, 49,800 people in Central Bedfordshire were aged between 0 and 15. A further 164,700 were aged 16-64, with 39,800 aged 65 and over, this figure includes 17,900 people aged 85 and over. The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase by about 50% between 2008 and 2021.

Disability: Using the widest definition there are more than 11 million disabled people in the UK, that's more than one in five of the adult population and one in 20 children. 80% of people experience a year of being disabled at some point in their lives and 66% of disabled people develop impairments during working age. The majority of disabled people have impairments that are not easily visible. In the 2011 census findings 15,465 (6.10%) residents in Central Bedfordshire indicated that day-to-day activities were limited a lot and 21,142 (8.30%) residents indicated that day-to-day activities were limited a little

Carers: Research undertaken by Carers UK indicates that over 2 million people become carers every year and 3 in 5 people will become a carer at some point in their lives. In the 2011 census findings 18,247 (7.2%) residents in Central Bedfordshire indicated that they provided between 1 to 19 hours a week of unpaid care. A further 2,702 (1.1%) of residents indicated that they provided 20 to 49 hours of unpaid care a week and 4,886 (1.9%) residents indicated that they provided 50 hours or more unpaid care a week.

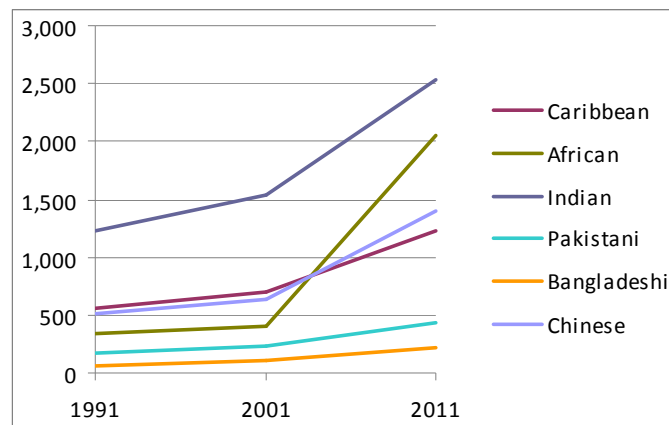
Gender Reassignment: The 2011 Census did not include a specific question in respect of gender reassignment. It is estimated from national research that 1 in 10,000 people experience the recognised medical condition known as gender dysphoria, generally referred to as being transgender or transsexual. In any school of 1,000 pupils there are likely to be 6 who will have transgender experience at some point in their lives.

Marriage and Civil Partnership: In 2011 52.5% of the Central Bedfordshire population were married and 0.1% had entered into a civil partnership. 29.2% of the population were single, 11.9% were separated / divorced and 6.3% were widowed.

Pregnancy and Maternity: The health and wellbeing of women before, during and after pregnancy is an important factor in giving children a healthy start in life and laying the groundwork for good health and wellbeing in later life. In Central Bedfordshire 90% of pregnant women accessed antenatal services before thirteen weeks of pregnancy. Although teenage pregnancies remain in line with the national average, they are higher than statistical neighbours. Children and young people who are already disadvantaged have an increased risk of teenage pregnancy.

Race: Central Bedfordshire is ethnically diverse with around 10.3% of people living in the area from black or ethnic minority communities. 1.2% of the population is Irish ('White Irish'). The largest Black and Minority Ethnic groups are Indian (1%), Black African (0.8%) and Chinese (0.6%).

Changes in Ethnic Groups other than White during 1991, 2001 and 2011

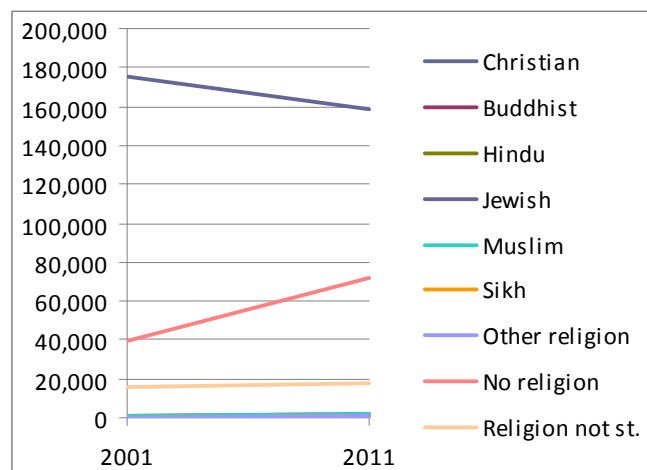


Source: ethnicity.ac.uk

People of mixed ethnicity make up around 1.9% of residents. The increasing amount of data on migrant workers, unaccompanied asylum seekers and other young people from non-UK backgrounds predicts that immigration in the region will increase.

Religion and Belief: Most of the population state their religion as Christian (62.2%), with (28.4%) having no religion and other religions constituting (2.6%) of the population. (Note: 6.8% did not state their religion)

Changes in Religion and Belief during 2001 – 2011



Source: ethnicity.ac.uk

Sex: The sex ratios of the Central Bedfordshire population vary according to age. In the younger age groups (ages 0-17) boys represent 51% of the population and girls 49%. In the working age adults groups (ages 18 -64) this ratio reverses with women representing 51% of the population and men 49%. At ages 65+ this trend increases with women representing 54% of the population and men 46%.

Sexual Orientation: The 2011 Census did not include a specific question in respect of sexual orientation. It is estimated that 'out' gay people living in the United Kingdom form between 6% -10% of the population. This means that in Central Bedfordshire approximately 20, 000 people are likely to openly be lesbian, gay or bisexual, with others feeling unable to disclose such information because they fear the reactions of people around them. The figure for civil partnerships in Central Bedfordshire was 300 in 2011.

Skill Levels: The proportion of working age people with at least NVQ1 or 2 qualifications (1 GCSE or similar is higher in Central Bedfordshire (80.6%) than England (77.5%). The proportion with NVQ4 or above (degree or similar) level in Central Bedfordshire (27.3%) is comparable with the figures for England (27.4%). Just under a fifth (19.4%) of Central Bedfordshire's working age population had no formal qualifications. This is slightly less than the figure for England (22.5%).

Employment: The findings of the 2011 Census indicated that 139,500 working age people in Central Bedfordshire (74.7%) were economically active. This figure includes both employed and unemployed people. In this group 6,400 people were unemployed.

Health: In 2011, 125,000 (49%) of residents reported that they were in very good health, 90,400 (35.5%) reported that they were in good health, 29,200 (11.5%) reported fair health, 7,700 (3%) reported bad health and 2,100 (0.8%) reported very bad health. Overall health is better than the UK norm whilst in terms of deprivation no part of Central Bedfordshire is within the worst 10% nationally. However, this overall picture of affluence masks some aspects of deprivation, and communities within Downside, Flitwick, Parkside, Sandy and Tithe Farm face particular challenges relative to the rest of the area. For example, there are parts of these communities which suffer from deprivation and appear in the top 10% nationally when specific indices of deprivation are considered such as Crime, Education, Skills and training and barriers to Housing and Services

2) Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act applies to public and private sector bodies and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplified the legislation base, removed inconsistencies and made it easier for people to understand and comply with the law. It also strengthened protection in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and inequality. The aim of the legislation is to ensure services and employment opportunities are available to all sections of society, in relation to the following protected characteristics, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Types of Discrimination and Definitions

Direct discrimination:

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

Associative discrimination:

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination:

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic

Indirect Discrimination:

Indirect discrimination can occur when a condition, rule, policy or even a practice is applied to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be shown that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. Being proportionate means being fair and reasonable, including showing that 'less discriminatory' alternatives have been considered as part of the decision making process

Harassment:

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual"

Victimisation:

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.

The Act also includes a new and additional protection relating to disability.

Discrimination Arising from Disability:

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the unfavourable treatment cannot be justified.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies proactively consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

The Equality Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Due Regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Duty as part of the process of decision-making. For example:

- How the Council acts as an employer
- How policies are developed, evaluated and reviewed
- How services are designed, delivered and evaluated
- How the Council commissions and procures services and products from other organisations

Advancing equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people because of their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed in discrimination law. This could mean making use of an exception or positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way that is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic – e.g. providing computer training for older people to help them to access information and services.

The Equality Duty is also supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty; and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

Specific Duty - Publish Information

Publishing relevant equality information helps to make public bodies transparent about their decision-making processes, and accountable to their service users. It gives the public

the information they need to hold public bodies to account for their performance on equality. The Council has published a variety of information on the website including this document.

Specific Duty – Identify Equality Objectives

The Public Sector Equality Duty required public bodies to prepare and publish, by 6 April 2012, one or more specific and measurable equality objectives which will help them to further the three aims of the Equality Duty. Subsequent objectives must be published at least every four years.

It was left to each public body to decide what and how many equality objectives it should set. It was recognised that by identifying objectives which were stretching, and which focused on the biggest equality challenges facing the public body, that the greatest impact could be achieved in furthering the aims of the Equality Duty.

When deciding what equality objectives to set, public bodies are advised to take account of:

- evidence of equality issues across all its functions;
- issues affecting people sharing each of the protected characteristics; and
- the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations.

The number of objectives should also be proportionate to the public body's size; the extent to which its functions affect equality; and evidence that such objectives are needed.

3) Central Bedfordshire Council Priorities – The Medium Term Plan

The Council is committed to a series of priorities, outlined in its Medium term Plan which collectively will help our communities to progress and prosper. They are:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Improved educational attainment.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.
- Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
- Value for money – freezing council tax.

The corporate equality objectives outlined in this Equality Strategy indirectly support all six Council priorities. In addition the strategy also identifies the service specific objectives already captured within previously agreed strategies and policies which contribute directly to the achievement of Council priorities.

4) The Central Bedfordshire Equality & Diversity Strategy 2013 -16

The Equality Act 2010 does not require that statutory bodies must continue to develop a separate Equality Scheme. The Council is keen however to ensure that it continues to adopt a good practice and robust approach to equality issues across all its activities and this can best be achieved through the continued implementation, review and inclusion of an Equality & Diversity Strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

This Equality & Diversity Strategy has been developed in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The strategy sets out a practical approach to delivering achievable solutions which:

- Address the key issues raised from our consultation with stakeholders regarding both service and employment practices.
- Have due regard to national best practice and guidance
- Takes account of local socio-economic factors and
- Recognising the good work and actions undertaken to date and the work remaining from a robust audit of the current strategy

As a result the Council has identified four corporate, overarching objectives and activities which are essential to ensuring that consideration of equality is embedded across all Council activities.

- **Strong Leadership (Championing Diversity in our Area, Identifying Objectives and Monitoring Outcomes)**
- **Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups**
- **Good Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce**
- **Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion**

The Strategy's action plan addresses these four key objectives and forms the foundation of ongoing activity across all service areas. These are detailed at Appendix 1.

The objectives have been identified with close reference to the three levels of the Equality Framework for Local Government, Developing, Achieving and Excellent. The Council believes it has reached Stage 2 Achieving and will strive for excellence but due to the need to prioritise resources on front line services has not sought costly, formal accreditation.

The Triennial Review (How Fair is Britain) 2010 published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) assessed a wealth of evidence sources and identified in its Agenda for Fairness the most pressing and significant equality challenges facing society

- Reduce the effect of socio-economic background on health and life expectancy
- Ensure that every individual has the chance to learn and to realise their talents to the full
- Give every person the opportunity to play a part in strengthening Britain's economy
- Put an end to identity-based violence and harassment
- Give more people greater personal autonomy and civic power

Since its formation in 2009 the Council has consulted on and approved a variety of strategies and policies. Numerous Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken as part of this process and a variety of specific equality objectives have already been approved by the Council in relation to equality which closely correlate with the Agenda for

Fairness. These are detailed at Appendix 2 and are grouped according to the above 5 aims.

5) Audit of the Council's Approach 2009 - 2013

The Council approved its first Equality and Diversity Scheme in May 2010. The Action Plan set out a focus on delivering tangible outcomes on the following themes:

- 1) Developing and embedding Central Bedfordshire Council's approach and processes
- 2) Leadership / Partnership Working
- 3) Workforce and employment issues, awareness, training and development
- 4) Feedback, engagement and consultation
- 5) Intelligence, monitoring and review

Progress in achieving these outcomes is detailed at Appendix 3

6) Employment Practices and Policy Statement

The Council aims to have a modern and diverse workforce that is representative of the community we serve. All staff should experience fairness and equity of treatment in the workplace and be treated with dignity and respect. The Council will actively work to remove discriminatory barriers that can prevent people from obtaining employment opportunities. The Council will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination including harassment, victimization and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping. The Council's approach and expectations of managers and employees is summarised in the Policy Statement detailed at Appendix 4

The Council will train and develop its workforce effectively, raising awareness of diverse community needs and ensuring that the work environment is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. All employees will be expected to promote these values at all times. Employees found in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action.

The Council will consult with staff to identify and implement improvements that can be made to working practices.

The Council will undertake annual equality monitoring of employment practices relating to:

- Staff in post
- Applications for employment,
- Applications for training and recipients of training
- Applications for promotion
- Staff who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures
- Staff involved in capability, grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Staff who cease employment

7) Accessibility Strategy and Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils

Local authorities are required to prepare an accessibility strategy in relation to schools for which they are the responsible body. Further strategies must be prepared at such times as may be prescribed.

The objectives of the accessibility strategy are to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculums;
- improve the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by schools;
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Local authorities in implementing an accessibility strategy must have regard to:

- the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the strategy;
- pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

In addition, schools and education authorities have had a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils since 2002 (originally under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) and, from October 2010, under the Equality Act 2010). From 1 September 2012 the reasonable adjustments duty for schools and education authorities includes a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils.

The duty is 'to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage' to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service.

Details of the council's approach can be found in Appendix 5.

Corporate Equality & Diversity Objectives and Action Plan 2013 - 2016

The Strategy’s action plan focuses on four key objectives which form the foundation of activity across all service areas:

- 1) Strong Leadership (Championing Diversity in our Area, Identifying Objectives and Monitoring Outcomes)
- 2) Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups
- 3) Good Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce
- 4) Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion

1) Strong Leadership (Championing Equality in our Area, Identifying Objectives and Monitoring Outcomes)			
Action	Description	Lead	Timescale
Promote equality and diversity at leadership level of the Council	There is a coherent vision of equality which is shared and owned by the authority, partners and the community.	Leader	Ongoing
Identify appropriate Equality Objectives and monitor progress	Authority can demonstrate success in meeting objectives	Executive Member for Corporate Resources	May 2013 and ongoing
Actively challenge the approach to equalities and diversity through overview and scrutiny	Authority scrutinises and challenges its own and its partners’ performance and service delivery	Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny	Ongoing
Embed equality and diversity objectives within organisational and partnership plans	Equality objectives have been integrated into strategic, operational and service specific plans	Council Management Team	Ongoing
2) Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups			
Action	Description	Lead	Timescale
Impact assess all relevant service and employment planning, design and delivery processes.	All relevant equality and diversity and human rights issues relating to service delivery and employment are identified and addressed via the completion of robust Equality Impact Assessments	Assistant Directors and Heads of Service	Ongoing
Promote and quality assure Equality Impact	All impact assessments reviewed and commented on by	Corporate	Ongoing

Assessments in line with the Council's agreed protocol.	the Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality and Diversity)	Policy Adviser (E&D)	
Gather evidence on the profile of communities and the extent of inequality and disadvantage	Systems are developed corporately and across services which collect and analyse soft and hard data / intelligence about the community their needs and aspirations	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Collect, share and use equality information with partners	Consistent and effective use of information and data throughout the Council and between partners	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Develop systems to collect, analyse and measure data on how all sections of the community are able to access services and outcomes achieved	Increased take-up rates amongst vulnerable and marginalised groups. Gaps identified and actions taken to and meet needs.	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Ensure consideration of equality is integral to customer care and complaints procedures	Improved customer satisfaction across all groups.	Assistant Chief Executive People and Organisation	Ongoing
Procurement and commissioning frameworks take account of the differing needs of users and citizens and the requirements of the equality duty.	Specifications for the procurement and commissioning of services are developed and assessed in accordance with the equalities impact assessment protocol.	Assistant Directors and Heads of Service	Ongoing

3) Good Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce

Action	Description	Lead	Timescale
Ensure human resource strategies and policies are in place to meet equality employment duties and secure a diverse and appropriately managed workforce.	Dignity at work and fair employment practices in place. Work/life balance promoted. Workforce that is representative of the community it serves at all levels.	Head of HR Policy & Development	Ongoing
Assess employment policies and procedures to identify equality implications	Adverse impacts identified and also opportunities to advance equality	Head of HR Policy & Development	Ongoing
Deliver a range of learning and development opportunities	Fair and equal access to learning and development opportunities. Workforce confident with equality issues	Head of HR Policy & Development	Ongoing
Monitor and analyse harassment and bullying incidents	Appropriate action is taken to address issues that have been identified	Head of HR Policy & Development	Ongoing
Establish and maintain a range of inclusive structures and mechanisms to engage and involve staff	Structure and processes in place to capture and address staff concerns	Head of HR Policy &	Ongoing

		Development	
Monitor and analyse all employment practices on a regular basis	Appropriate action is taken to address issues that have been identified	Head of HR Policy & Development	Ongoing
4) Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion			
Action	Description	Lead	Timescale
Develop inclusive community engagement structures throughout the authority and its partnerships	Implement and embed the Community Engagement Strategy across the organisation	Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement	Ongoing
Ensure all service areas are consistent and inclusive in their approach to engagement and participation	The authority involves and consults with all its communities in accordance with the Consultation toolkit	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Design internal, external and partnership communication strategies which promote good relations across all local communities.	Ensure the Council's communications strategy takes account of equalities issues. The Council's branding guidelines and advice includes the need to reflect diversity in terms of images and content	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Establish and maintain structures within the authority and across partnerships to promote positive relations, enable different groups of people to get on well together and deal effectively with harassment and hate crimes.	Increase in the reporting of cases of harassment and hate crime. Increase in conviction rates	Community Safety Partnership	Ongoing
Maintain an effective forum of local experts focussing on equality and diversity issues	High priority Equality Impact Assessments are considered and assessed by the Equality Forum	Corporate Policy Adviser (E&D)	Ongoing
Improve the participation of under represented groups in civic and public life in particular with regard to disabled people	Demonstrable increase of under-represented groups in civic life Continued implementation of Engagement Strategy	Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement	Ongoing

Service Specific Objectives which Tackle Equality & Diversity Priorities

Aim 1: To reduce the effect of socio-economic background on health and life expectancy		
Directorate	Objective	Council Plan & Date Approved
Children's Services	<p>Children and Young People's Plan</p> <p>Priority 2: Protecting children and keeping them safe; Priority 4: Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children's emotional and physical health</p> <p>Objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process. • Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people. • Focus on early intervention including children's mental health services, childhood obesity, drugs and alcohol and sexual health. 	<p>Children and Young People's Plan</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 15/03/2011</p>
Social Care Health and Housing	<p>Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board</p> <p>The Government White paper Equity and Excellence passes responsibility for public health to local authorities. Objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote health and reduce inequalities • Support and care for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable 	<p>Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board by April 2012</p> <p>Full Power from April 2013</p>
Public Health	<p>Inequalities in Central Bedfordshire – A report by the Director of Public Health</p> <p>The report summarises health inequalities in central Bedfordshire and recommends actions that can be taken to address these inequalities</p>	<p>Draft copy published November 2012</p>
Aim 2: To ensure that every individual has the chance to learn and to realise their talents to the full		
Directorate	Equality Objective	Council Plan & Date Approved
Children's Services	<p>Children and Young People's Plan</p> <p>Priority 1: Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationships with schools;</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Plan</p>

	<p>Objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners including underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances. • Develop and promote children and young people’s positive contribution to all communities so that they are able to influence the decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing. • Reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour. <p>Priority 3: Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention;</p> <p>Objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment which will have the outcome of more families working and thus reducing levels of family and child poverty. • To improve life chances of children and families by intervening early to prevent poor outcomes and raising educational achievements and aspirations with the outcome that children from poor households gain better qualifications to ensure their access to the labour market so that the cycle of intergenerational poverty is broken. 	<p>Approved by Executive Committee 15/03/2011</p> <p>Child Poverty Strategy</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 15/03/2011</p>
Children’s Services	<p>Disability Review - Transform services for disabled children.</p> <p>An independent review of services for Children with Disabilities is being undertaken for disabled children, young people their parents and carers living in Central Bedfordshire. The review will consider services delivered across social care, health, education and voluntary sector provision. The review will also consider how residential short breaks are delivered. The proposed model of service delivery will ensure the coordination of services across and between specialist, targeted and universal services</p>	<p>Children and Young People’s Plan Disability Review</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 10/01/2012</p>
Aim 3: To give every person the opportunity to play a part in strengthening Britain’s economy		
Directorate	Objective	Council Plan & Date Approved
Sustainable Communities	<p>Economic Development Plan:</p> <p>Priority 3: Getting our residents into work</p> <p>Priority 4: Increasing the supply of our skilled people.</p> <p>Work stream 7. Improving Access to work and learning</p> <p>Ensuring residents are able to access employment, learning. The target groups identified within the Local</p>	<p>Economic Development Plan</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 11/11/2011</p>

	<p>Economic Assessment as requiring additional support to access the labour market and develop their skills are: 18-24 year olds and over 50s, disabled people and ethnic minorities. These groups are prioritised within the Into Work section of the plan and measures are proposed which will tailor welfare provision to the needs of these groups and tackle youth unemployment.</p> <p>It is proposed to monitor the EDP using the following core indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people in employment • Number of out of work benefit claimants • Economic activity rate • Number of people in apprenticeships. <p>Into Work - To monitor the performance of the Central Bedfordshire Labour Market and people's ability to access employment, the following indicators will be monitored annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people who are unemployed or economically inactive accessing information advice and guidance on volunteering through volunteer centres • The levels of youth unemployment <p>Skills for Growth - To monitor the level of individuals' skills, take up of training and business skill needs the following indicators will be monitored annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of working age people with level 2, 3, 4 qualifications • % of people who have received job related training in Private Sector in the last four weeks 	
Sustainable Communities	<p>All Age Skills Strategy</p> <p>Priority 1: Working together - Enhance partnership working and improve the availability and dissemination of local labour market intelligence</p> <p>Priority 2: Developing the Current and Future Workforce - Increasing the proportion of the workforce with recognised qualifications, and supporting access to academic and vocational opportunities</p> <p>Priority 3: Raising Individuals' Aspirations and Achievements - Promote and raise awareness of the support and opportunities available at all ages for skills development and the importance of skills in achieving ambitions.</p>	<p>All Age Skills Strategy</p> <p>Scheduled for Approval by Executive Committee 27/03/2012</p>
Corporate Resources	<p>Internal Workforce and Employment Issues, Awareness, Training and Development</p> <p>Objectives for 2012 – Identified Via Annual Employment Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the data that we hold relating to protected characteristics in employment • Increase awareness of equality requirements through training 	<p>Annual Employment Monitoring Report 2010/11</p>

Aim 4: To put an end to identity-based violence and harassment		
Directorate	Objective	Council Plan & Date Approved
Sustainable Communities	<p>Community Safety Partnership Plan</p> <p>Priorities for 2011-12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce Anti social Behaviour • Reduce Re-Offending • Reduce Domestic Abuse <p>Includes Sexual Abuse Action Plan and actions related to Safeguarding Adults.</p>	<p>Community Safety Partnership Plan</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 15/03/2011</p> <p>Annual Refresh Scheduled for Approval by Executive Committee 27/03/2012.</p>
Aim 5: To give more people greater personal autonomy and civic power		
Directorate	Objective	Council Plan & Date Approved
Social Care Health and Housing	<p>‘Transforming People’s Lives’ –Transforming Care and Support Through Personalisation</p> <p>Putting People First consists of four main elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal services - such as suitable housing, access to transport, including bus passes, leisure, including free swimming and libraries (to reduce social isolation, contribute to health and well being) and safe pavements (to reduce falls requiring hospital admissions which increases the need for longer term care), more accessible advice and information so people can make their own decisions about longer term support options. • Early intervention and prevention - there is increasing evidence that re-directing investment to Telecare / Assistive Technology, health checks and re-ablement services reduces dependency and longer term costs • Social capital - support to carers, volunteering, and village care schemes etc which increase the capacity of local communities to provide solutions and reduce the need for direct support from the state. • Choice and control People will have the right to Live free from abuse or neglect; Take risks, Meet personal aspirations, Live independently <p>Council will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure high quality personally tailored support is available • Offer a Personal Budget based on self / supported assessment • Work with partners to enable people to live a life free from abuse or neglect & enjoy the best quality of life 	<p>Transforming People’s Lives</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 09/02/2010</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make available with partners a range of universal & preventative services • Improve advice & information for individuals, carers & community groups • Listen & involve local people in the transformation of care & support • Ensure the best possible use is made of funding channelled through the Council • Support the development of a skilled local workforce 	
Corporate Resources	<p>Community Engagement Strategy</p> <p>Principle 1) Giving more people more opportunities to inform and influence decisions Principle 4) Building the capacity of local people to engage and to do more for themselves</p>	<p>Community Engagement Strategy Approved by Executive 23/08/2011</p>
Other Key Council Strategies Plans and Policies which Promote Equality of Opportunity		
Directorate	Objective	Council Plan & Date Approved
Social Care Health and Housing	<p>“Let’s Rent” – Housing Option</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • innovative private sector housing option that allows households a choice to access a regulated private sector home, with all requisite support mechanisms for tenancy sustainment. • potential to tackle inequality by focusing on ensuring that the diverse housing needs of customers can be met, whilst increasing customer choice and control, and promoting high quality sustainable homes. • scheme will assist in preventing homelessness, to offer customers threatened with homelessness a viable and sustainable alternative to social housing or temporary accommodation and to promote customer choice and control • Outcomes measured in terms of Homelessness Prevention, supporting vulnerable children and adults, health and educational outcomes, and providing sustainable homes for the community. 	<p>“Let’s Rent” – Housing Option</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 09/02/2010</p>
Social Care Health and Housing	<p>Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show a year-on-year increase in the proportion of vulnerable households living in decent homes and 2. As a minimum to reach the target figure of 70% by 2010. 	<p>Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 09/03/2010</p>
Social Care Health and Housing	<p>Homelessness Strategy</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy has the potential to tackle inequality through actions which are designed to meet the diverse housing needs of customers across Central Bedfordshire, whilst increasing customer choice and control, and promoting high quality sustainable homes.</p>	<p>Homelessness Strategy</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 06/04/2010</p>

	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonise housing options services across Central Bedfordshire. • Work with young people aged 16-24 to meet their needs more effectively. • Embed the Think Family approach within all homelessness prevention activity and broader interventions to sustain families in permanent settled accommodation. • Strengthen safeguarding practice for vulnerable adults and children across all aspects of housing options and homelessness prevention. • Investigate the particular problems and pathway journeys that are experienced by people with complex needs, including mental health and substance abuse. • Strengthen equalities practice across all aspects of the service. • Make best use of private sector accommodation in meeting all other homelessness priorities. • Sharing awareness and working in partnership with the community and between partner agencies. • Tenancy sustainment. 	
All	<p>Sustainable Community Strategy</p> <p>Eight priorities, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising employment opportunities and delivering housing growth to meet the needs of our communities • Ensuring our local people have the skills to prosper • Keeping our communities safe • Nurturing a sense of pride and belonging • Getting around and caring for a green and clean environment • Promoting health and reducing health inequalities • Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people • Supporting and caring for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable <p>Two key themes that underpin and support all the priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating the conditions for economic success and community prosperity, and • raising standards and tackling inequalities. 	<p>Sustainable Community Strategy</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 08/06/2010</p>
Sustainable Communities	<p>Local Transport Plan</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the ease of access to employment by sustainable modes. • Reduce the impact of commuting trips on local communities. • Increase the number of children travelling to school by sustainable modes of transport. 	<p>Local Transport Plan</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 15/02/2011</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to healthcare provision by the core health service (hospitals and GPs). • Ensure access to food stores and other local services particularly in local and district centres. • Enable access to a range of leisure, cultural and tourism facilities for residents and visitors. • Enable the efficient and reliable transportation of freight. • Encourage the movement of freight by sustainable modes. • Minimise the negative impacts of freight trips on local communities. • Reduce the risk of people being killed or seriously injured. 	
Corporate Resources	<p>Customer First Programme</p> <p>Aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the customer experience whilst interacting with Central Bedfordshire Council. Moving services online will make self-service easy for those who are able to access and use the internet. Integration of front and back office processes will ensure that customer enquiries can be resolved at their first point of contact with us, through the lowest cost channel. • Unlock the financial benefits that can be gained through avoiding unnecessary contact with customers or, where appropriate, enabling customers to interact with CBC through our website. <p>As part of the development of the Channel Shift Strategy consideration has been given to issues such as location of facilities, access to buildings and provision of translation services etc. There is also an undertaking that all staff will offer a consistently high level of customer service and have access to high quality sources of accurate information</p>	<p>Business Case Approved by Executive Committee 15/11/2011</p>
Sustainable Communities	<p>Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy</p> <p>To set out the vision, strategic objectives and spatial strategy for the area up to 2031 and the policies for achieving the strategic vision. This will entail an assessment of general development needs together with the consideration of any necessary Green Belt reviews. The identification of strategic-scale development sites will also be considered.</p>	<p>Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy To be approved by May 2013</p>
Sustainable Communities	<p>Gypsy and Traveller Plan</p> <p>To identify the Council's approach to the provision of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches and sites, including the allocation of new sites if required</p>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller Plan To be approved by September 2013</p>

Audit of the Council's Approach 2009 - 2013

Theme 1: Developing and Embedding Central Bedfordshire Council's Approach and Processes	
Action	Progress
Prepare the Council for compliance with the Equality Framework for Local Government.	Scheme reflected requirements of Equality Act and Framework.
Corporate and service level structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of the equalities agenda	Implementation led by Policy and Strategy Team. Corporate Policy Adviser (E&D) provides support to all teams.
Political overview and scrutiny processes review equality impacts and objectives.	Committee reporting format requires identification of equality implications.
Embed equality and diversity objectives within organisational planning.	E&D objectives identified during development of all Council Plans.
Corporate strategies and policies are being impact assessed on an ongoing basis and published. A corporately prioritised programme of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) is in place	Over 200 EqIAs undertaken since 2009 (average 60 per year) EqIAs identified via Forward Plan and in discussion with managers.
Ensure that human rights considerations are identified when planning services	Consideration built into EqIA process.
Appropriate measures in place to ensure the service needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups are identified and that customers and citizens are treated with dignity and respect.	EqIA and consultation processes give priority to consideration of these issues as services and policies are developed
Procurement and commissioning frameworks take account of the differing needs of users and citizens. All commissioning and procurement processes take account of equality issues. Contracts include a requirement to deliver an effective and appropriate service fairly and equitably.	Procurement processes include assessment of equality practices. EqIAs inform development of Commissioning Strategies. Contract specifications increasingly developed in Social Care following consultation with service users and families
Theme 2: Leadership / Partnership Working	
Action	Progress
Leader, chief executive and partners commit publically to improving equality outcomes and can tell the equality story for their community.	Equality Objectives identified and published 6 April 2012

Sustainable community and other partnership strategies and working arrangements (LSP, LAA, and MAA) have been reviewed with the voluntary and community sector and the community to deliver locally identified equality outcomes.	Sustainable Community Strategy includes commitment to tackle inequalities. Community Engagement Strategy includes commitment to give more people, more opportunities to influence decisions.
Internal, external and partnership communication strategies are designed to promote good relations across all local communities	Brand Guidelines consider accessibility & inclusive customer focus. Publications highlight extensive range of Council activities but not really focused on promoting good relations.
Structures are in place within the authority and across partnerships to promote positive relations, enable different groups of people to get on well together and deal with harassment / hate crimes effectively.	Police subscribe to national reporting help line Stop Hate UK. Publicity drive planned. Community Safety Partnership considering research into local levels of hate crime and under reporting.
Theme 3: Workforce & Employment Issues, Awareness, Training & Development	
Action	Progress
The workforce strategy identifies key equality issues. Authority understands its local labour market, the barriers equality groups face and the impact this has on achieving a diverse workforce.	People Strategy approved in March 2010. Equality was one of 5 key themes. Annual employment monitoring undertaken to review progress and identify issues
Ensure that all employment procedures comply with equality legislation and employment codes of practice.	Policies developed with reference to ACAS guidance and Equality Act Code of Practice
Authority has a prioritised programme for carrying out EqlAs on major and new employment policies. These are made public.	EIAs undertaken on Your Space, Recruitment, Managing Change, Terms / Conditions, Redeployment, Disciplinary Learning & Development and Capability policies
The authority has made a commitment to equal pay and started work on its equal pay review.	All the legacy authorities had completed single status. As a result of the TUPE transfer of employees into CBC at 01.04.09, there are men and women carrying out like work being paid at different rates because of TUPE. TUPE is a genuine material factor that can be used as a defence against any equal pay claims. Any previous equal pay claims that existed under BCC and transferred to CBC have been dealt with.
Equality issues integrated into appraisal systems	Highlighted on PDR template for 2011/12 but not currently
The Council carries out a training needs assessment of the development required to deliver equality outcomes	Equality Adviser and Learning and Development Advisers meet regularly to review provision.
Raise awareness of equality issues in training courses and ensure officers have relevant and appropriate levels of skills	Draft Learning & Development Policy Range of Ongoing Equality Courses informed by EIA processes.

required. Ensure that equality and diversity policies are communicated, understood and mainstreamed into CBC.	Equality Clause in Training Agreements
Structures are in place to identify, prevent and deal effectively with harassment and bullying in the workplace	Council Value: Respect and Empowerment. Conditions of Service, Grievance, Disciplinary and Accident & Incident Reporting policies in place. Occupational Health and Well-Being Team provides Employee Support. Staff survey monitors views
A range of inclusive structures are in place to engage and involve staff before priorities are set.	Team Talk, Annual satisfaction survey, roadshows and issue specific surveys (e.g. Your Space, Terms & Conditions)
Theme 4: Feedback, Engagement and Consultation.	
Action	Progress
Inclusive community engagement structures developed throughout the authority and its partnerships which include communities of interest. The authority involves and consults with all its communities including disabled people, on an ongoing basis before priorities are agreed. The authority involves and consults with vulnerable and marginalized groups to ensure their views are taken account of. Services ensure that local communities are consulted and/ or engaged with appropriately about service planning and delivery	Community Engagement Strategy adopted by Council on 13/10/09. Social Care Users and Carers Engagement Strategy in place Statement of Community Involvement agreed CBC consultation toolkit designed to help employees plan and carry out effective and meaningful consultation and engagement activities. The toolkit provides information around each stage of the process, from planning a consultation, involving hard to hear groups and interpreting the results. Integral part of EIA processes. The E Communications and Consultation team provide guidance and support in conducting consultation.
Customer feedback and complaints system. Carry out an annual review of complaints, categorised by the equality strands, and develop actions for improvement.	Statutory Adult Social Care & Children's Services complaints are currently monitored and reported annually. Housing to be incorporated in ASC with view to introduce tenant and member involvement. June 2011 may implement complaints customer satisfaction survey. This records some equality data CRM system will enable annual reporting of all Council complaints. Some customer data will be recorded but not across all protected characteristics
Maintain an effective forum of local experts focussing on equality and diversity issues	Forum established since June 09. Four meetings a year held to review EIAs and consider other equality issues
EqIAs involve appropriate community and / or stakeholder groups and are made public.	Forum and stakeholder involvement is Integral part of EIA processes.

Plans in place to improve the participation of under represented groups in civic and public life particularly disabled people.	Engagement Strategy approved 06/10
Theme 5: Intelligence, Monitoring and Review.	
Action	Progress
The authority gathers evidence on the profile of communities, the extent of inequality and disadvantage within their communities and to identify priorities across the authority. Collect, share and use equality information with partners	Ward profiles available on website Joint Strategic Needs Assessment available on website Deprivation and inequalities data included
Systems developed corporately and across services to collect and analyse soft and hard data / intelligence about the community their needs and aspirations.	Customer and Community Insight Team, the E.Communications & Consultation Team and Corporate Policy Adviser promote the collection and use of such data across the Council.
Robust equalities monitoring in relation to Service Delivery, Employment and Corporate overview	Variety of approaches across council. Some gaps in information for certain protected characteristics.
The authority is developing systems to collect, analyse and measure data on how all sections of the community are able to access services.	Customer Services Strategy helping to raise awareness of services, develop a variety of access options, increase levels of access and monitor outcomes / customer satisfaction levels amongst different groups. The strategy includes a commitment to implement a Customer Insight programme which uses Customer Segmentation data to identify customer groups. This illustrates the types of Council and partner services accessed by each group and preferred methods of service access.
Monitoring and reporting of the Single Equality Scheme and actions through agreed consultation method/s.	Scheme adopted May 2010 Action Plan reviewed April / May 2011. Updated Action Plan presented to Equality Forum 23 June 2011

Policy Statement - Summary of Key Actions

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to the elimination of discrimination in both service delivery and employment because it is essential that services are provided fairly to all sections of our community and because we value the contribution our employees make to achieve this.

Equality of opportunity is about:

- Treating people with dignity and respect and accepting people as individuals.
- Understanding and addressing the needs of individuals or groups relating to age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other factors such as socio economic disadvantage.
- Engaging with service users, local communities, staff, stakeholders and contractors to identify and implement improvements.
- Tackling barriers which restrict access to services and employment opportunities
- Knowing who uses (or should use) different services.
- Making sure our recruitment, selection, training and promotion processes support us to appoint the best people for the job and to develop and maintain the highest standards of skills and expertise.

The Council will act to:

- § eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
- § ensure that all service users are treated with dignity and respect and that we recognise and value people's differences
- § understand that some groups of people experience more disadvantage than others and target services to meet their particular needs
- § encourage participation of under represented groups in public life
- § continually improve services to make sure they are accessible and provided fairly to everyone in our community
- § create and maintain a workplace where all employees are treated with dignity and respect
- § develop and train our members and employees to help them recognise equality issues

Directors and Managers will

- Actively promote awareness of equality and compliance with legislation
- Undertake training on equality and diversity issues regularly (every three years)
- Ensure fairness and equity of treatment in service delivery and employment practices
- Identify equality implications of council functions, strategies, policies and decisions
- Ensure the service delivery and working environment is free of discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying
- Ensure that all people who help to deliver our services are aware of this policy statement
- Provide clear information about where, and to whom, customers should complain
- Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them
- Make clear to staff that discrimination is unacceptable and that it will be treated as a serious matter and a disciplinary offence
- Deal promptly and thoroughly with complaints of discrimination recording all incidents
- Support customers or staff who experience discrimination
- Take appropriate action against any customer or member of staff who harasses or acts in a discriminatory way towards other customers or members of staff

Employees will

- Act in line with this policy statement
- Ensure that they treat other colleagues and customers fairly and with respect
- Undertake training on equality and diversity issues regularly (every three years)
- Not use discriminatory behaviour or practices in the workplace or when providing services
- Record any incident of harassment, bullying or victimisation
- Support customers or staff who experience discrimination
- Provide clear information about where, and to whom, customers should complain
- Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them

Accessibility Strategy and Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils

Central Bedfordshire Council believes that every child/young person should be able to access the full curriculum and other opportunities that are provided through their local early years setting/school, and will work with these settings and schools to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to make this possible. Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to working with schools and settings, partner agencies such as the Health Services, children and young people and their parents/carers to remove barriers to the achievement of good outcomes for children with disabilities. We promote appropriate inclusive practices, both in our own services and in the schools and settings in our area. While we will comply with all legislation around Equality, Access and Disability, we will also seek, together with our schools and settings, to go beyond this to make positive inclusion a reality for children and young people.

For a number of years the Council has managed and administered funding for improved accessibility through the Schools Access Initiative (SAI). Numerous modifications and improvements have been made across all Central Bedfordshire schools to increase physical access. The Council has maintained an up to date Asset Management Plan for maintained schools and accessibility audits have been separately documented as part of suitability assessments to inform use of the SAI funding.

The current capital programme continues to allow for SAI funding for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, and this is reviewed as appropriate. Voluntary Aided schools are also able to access DfE funding through the Local Authority Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme.

The Council also works closely with health partners to establish the needs of individual pupils and to identify appropriate support. All new buildings and facilities are designed to be fully accessible.

An increasing number of Central Bedfordshire schools are seeking academy status and as a result are taking on full responsibility for ensuring accessibility for disabled pupils. Non maintained schools will have to apply to the Education Funding Agency for capital adjustments and will need to fund the provisions of auxiliary aids and services from their own budgets.

Central Bedfordshire Council will continue to support and challenge settings/schools to ensure that they fulfil these responsibilities. In instances where responsibilities are shared this will be managed strategically.

The Council will continue to signpost schools to guidance and good practice in making reasonable adjustments and removing barriers to learning and achievement.

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Meeting: Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date: 04 June 2013
Subject: Work Programme 2013 – 2014 & Executive Forward Plan
Report of: Chief Executive
Summary: The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

Contact Officer: Jonathon Partridge, Corporate Policy & Scrutiny Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The work programme of the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

Financial:

1. Not applicable.

Legal:

2. Not applicable.

Risk Management:

3. Not applicable.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Not applicable.

Public Health:

6. Not applicable.

Community Safety:

7. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

8. Not applicable.

Procurement:

9. Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. **that the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
 - (a) **considers and approves the work programme attached, subject to any further amendments it may wish to make;**
 - (b) **considers the Executive Forward Plan; and**
 - (c) **considers whether it wishes to add any further items to the work programme and/or establish any Task Forces to assist it in reviewing specific items.**

Work Programme

10. Attached at Appendix A is the currently drafted work programme for the Committee.
11. Also attached at Appendix B is the latest version of the Executive's Forward Plan so that Overview & Scrutiny Members are fully aware of the key issues Executive Members will be taking decisions upon in the coming months. Those items relating specifically to this Committee's terms of reference are shaded in light grey.
12. The Committee is now requested to consider the work programme attached and amend or add to it as necessary. This will allow officers to plan accordingly but will not preclude further items being added during the course of the year if Members so wish and capacity exists.

Task Forces

13. In addition to consideration of the work programme, Members may also wish to consider how each item will be reviewed i.e. by the Committee itself (over one or a number of Committee meetings) or by establishing a Member Task Force to review an item in greater depth and report back its findings.

Conclusion

14. Members are requested to consider and agree the attached work programme, subject to any further amendments/additions they may wish to make and highlight those items within it where they may wish to establish a Task Force to assist the Committee in its work.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013/14

Appendix B: The latest Executive Forward Plan.

Appendix A

Work Programme for Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2013 - 2014

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
1.	23 July 2013	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
2.	23 July 2013	Statutory Proposals to Extend the Age Range at 5 Schools		
3.	23 July 2013	Changes to School Curriculum	To receive a presentation on the changes to school curriculum.	
4.	23 July 2013	Children's Trust Annual Report		
5.	23 July 2013	Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the fourth quarter of 2012/13	
6.	23 July 2013	Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's capital & revenue budget monitoring information for the fourth quarter of 2012/13	
7.	03 September 2013	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
8.	03 September 2013	Adoption, Fostering & Private Fostering Annual Reports	To consider the annual reports for the Adoption Service, Fostering Service and Private Fostering Provision.	
9.	03 September 2013	LSCB Annual Report	To consider the Local Safeguarding Children Board's annual report for 2011/12.	

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
10.	03 September 2013	Looked After Children – supporting transition to adulthood	To receive a presentation on the support for LAC reaching adulthood.	
11.	03 September 2013	Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the first quarter of 2013/14	
12.	03 September 2013	Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's capital & revenue budget monitoring information for the first quarter of 2013/14	
13.	15 October 2013	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
14.	15 October 2013	Disability Review	To receive a presentation regards the close down of the actions of the Disability Review.	
15.	15 October 2013	Annual Resilience Report		
16.	15 October 2013	Proposals for New School Places from Sept. 2016 (Dec. Executive) and refresh of School Organisation Plan	To receive a report regards proposals and the refresh of the Plan.	
17.	13 December 2013	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
18.	13 December 2013	Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the second quarter of 2013/14	
19.	13 December 2013	Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's capital & revenue budget monitoring information for the second quarter of 2013/14	
20.	21 January 2014	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
21.	21 January 2014	Customer Feedback Annual Report	To consider the Council's annual report regarding Children's Services complaints and compliments	
22.	25 February 2014	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
23.	01 April 2014	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
24.	01 April 2014	Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the third quarter of 2013/14	
25.	01 April 2014	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's capital & revenue budget monitoring information for the third quarter of 2013/14	
26.	06 May 2014	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	
27.	17 June 2014	Executive Member Update	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	

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Appendix B

Central Bedfordshire Council Forward Plan of Key Decisions 1 June 2013 to 31 May 2014

- 1) During the period from **1 June 2013 to 31 May 2014**, Central Bedfordshire Council plans to make key decisions on the issues set out below. “Key decisions” relate to those decisions of the Executive which are likely:
 - to result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (namely £200,000 or above per annum) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - to be significant in terms of their effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of Central Bedfordshire.
- 2) The Forward Plan is a general guide to the key decisions to be determined by the Executive and will be updated on a monthly basis. Key decisions will be taken by the Executive as a whole. The Members of the Executive are:

Cllr James Jamieson	Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive
Cllr Maurice Jones	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Cllr Mark Versallion	Executive Member for Children’s Services
Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing
Cllr Nigel Young	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Cllr Brian Spurr	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services
Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner MBE	Executive Member for Economic Partnerships
Cllr Richard Stay	Executive Member for External Affairs
- 3) Whilst the majority of the Executive’s business at the meetings listed in this Forward Plan will be open to the public and media organisations to attend, there will inevitably be some business to be considered that contains, for example, confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information.

This is a formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 that part of the Executive meeting listed in this Forward Plan will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

- 4) Those items identified for decision more than one month in advance may change in forthcoming Plans. Each new Plan supersedes the previous Plan. Any person who wishes to make representations to the Executive about the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made should do so to the officer whose telephone number and e-mail address are shown in the Forward Plan. Any correspondence should be sent to the contact officer at the relevant address as shown below. General questions about the Plan such as specific dates, should be addressed to the Committee Services Manager, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
- 5) The agendas for meetings of the Executive will be published as follows:

Meeting Date	Publication of Agenda
14 May 2013	2 May 2013
25 June 2013	13 June 2013
13 August 2013	1 August 2013
24 September 2013	12 September 2013
5 November 2013	24 October 2013
10 December 2013	28 November 2013
14 January 2014	02 January 2014
4 February 2014	23 January 2014
18 March 2014	6 March 2014
22 April 2014	10 April 2014
27 May 2014	15 May 2014

Central Bedfordshire Council

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 June 2013 to 31 May 2014

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 1 May 2013

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
1.	Community Infrastructure Levy -	To approve the consultation and subsequent Submission of the Community Infrastructure Levy draft charging schedule.	25 June 2013		Report	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 24/05/13 to Contact Officer: Jonathan Baldwin, Senior Planning Officer Email: jonathan.baldwin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5510
2.	Central Heating Installations Contract District Wide -	To award the contract to the preferred contractor for the central heating installations contract district wide for 2013 to 2016 to council housing properties.	25 June 2013		Report Public - Appendix Exempt	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 24/05/13 to Contact Officer: Peter Joslin, Housing Asset Manager or Basil Quinn, Housing Asset Manager Performance Email: peter.joslin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5395 or basil.quinn@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5118

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
3.	Revenue, Capital Provisional and Housing Revenue Account Outturn 2012/13 -	To consider the revenue, capital provisional and Housing Revenue Account outturn 2012/13.	25 June 2013		Reports	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 24/05/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
4.	Children and Young People's Plan 2013-15 -	To endorse the Children and Young People's Plan 2013-15.	25 June 2013	Priorities, outcomes actions and measures have been refreshed following engagement. This includes with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Persons Focus Group (January 2013) • Children's Trust Board (February 2013) • Headteacher meetings (January 2013) • Governors Newsletter • Trust Board Delivery Groups (January – February 2013) • Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (April 2013) 	Children and Young People's Plan 2013-15	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 01/05/13 to Contact Officer: Karen Oellermann, Head of Partnerships and Communication Email: karen.oellermann@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5265

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
5.	Customer First 2 -	To approve the full business case for Customer First 2, allowing further improvements in self-serve for our customers and to approve investment in the enabling technology.	25 June 2013		Report Capital Budget	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 24/05/13 to Contact Officer: Deb Clarke, Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) Email: deb.clarke@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6651
6.	Central Bedfordshire's Community Engagement Strategy 2013-2016 -	To approve Central Bedfordshire's Community Engagement Strategy 2013 – 2016.	25 June 2013	Partner organisations have been consulted including police, fire, health, town and parish councils, voluntary and community sector organisations and CBC service areas during June – December 2012 via conferences, meetings and reports. Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee – December 2012 and April 2013. Other stakeholders via the Central Bedfordshire Together website.	Report and Community Engagement Strategy Document	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 24/05/13 to Contact Officer: Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement Email: peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6740

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
7.	Determination of Proposals for Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation in September 2014 -	Determination of Proposals for Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation in September 2014.	13 August 2013	<p>Consultation will be with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the governing body of the schools which are the subject of proposals; • families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the schools; • the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected; • families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals including families of pupils at feeder schools; • trade unions who represent staff at the schools and representatives of trade unions of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals; • Constituency MPs for the schools that are the subject of the proposals; • the local parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposals is situated. <p>Consultation period between March and July 2013 including press releases, public meetings, statutory notices.</p>	Report and outcome of consultation	<p>Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 12/07/13 to Contact Officer: Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning Email: rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5572</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
8.	Early Intervention Offer in Children's Services -	To adopt the Early Intervention Offer in Children's Services.	13 August 2013		Offer Document	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 12/07/13 to Contact Officer: Sue Tyler, Acting Assistant Director, Operational Services, Children's Services Email: sue.tyler@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6553
9.	East West Rail -	To agree a contribution by the Council towards the delivery of the East West Rail Western Section, and authorisation to sign appropriate legal agreements.	13 August 2013	Consultation and joint working with partner local authorities in the East-West Rail Consortium (throughout). Internal consultation and joint working on development of funding package (throughout).	Report - Exempt	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 12/07/13 to the Contact Officer: James Gleave, Senior Strategic Transport Officer Email: james.gleave@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6516

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
10.	Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan -	The report proposes the medium term financial planning framework for 2014-15 through 2017-18. To endorse the proposed framework for updating of the Medium Term Financial Plan and the preparation of a budget for 2014/15 and endorse the timetable for the consultation process.	13 August 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 12/07/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
11.	Statutory Proposals to Extend the Age Range at Five Schools -	To determine statutory proposals to extend the age ranges of the following five schools: Lancot Community Lower School, Kensworth VC Lower School, Ashton St Peters VA Lower School, Ashton VA Middle School, Manshead VA Upper School	Delegated Decisions Meeting 13 August 2013	<p>Consultees are to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head teachers and Chairs of Governors of all schools and academies within Central Bedfordshire. • School staff within all schools. • Relevant trade unions. • All CBC ward Members. • CBC Children's Service Management Team. • CBC Sustainable Transport Officer. • Local MPs. • Local Town and Parish Councils. • Neighbouring local authorities. • Parents and carers for all schools. <p>Informal consultations are being carried out over a 6 week period February - May 2013. If the decision is made to progress to the publication of statutory notices, these will be published for 6 weeks between June - July 2013. Consultation is via direct email, Central Essentials, Governors Essentials, Members Bulletin, local press, paper copies of the consultation documents, and (for the statutory notices) the placing of notices on display at the school premises.</p>	<p>Report, which contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original proposal (for the community school). The original informal consultation document. The outcome of the informal consultation. The minutes of the public meeting. The statutory notice. The prescribed information which accompanies the statutory notice. 	<p>Cllr Mark A G Versallion Comments by 12/07/13 to Contact Officer: Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning Email: rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5572</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
12.	Joint Venture Proposal -	To receive a report on the proposals for joint ventures.	24 September 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Peter Burt, MRICS, Head of Property Assets Email: peter.burt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0330 300 5281
13.	Leisure Strategy -	To adopt the Leisure Strategy: Chapter 4, Physical Activity Strategy;	24 September 2013	All Member Presentation of Draft Strategy on 10 July 2013. Draft Strategy to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 July 2013. Draft Strategies to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 September 2013.	Chapter 4, Physical Activity Strategy	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services Email: jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4258
14.	Capital Programme Review 2013/14 -	To receive the outcome of the Capital Programme 2013/14 review.	24 September 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
15.	Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Quarter 1 Budget Monitor Reports -	To consider the revenue, capital and HRA quarter 1 budget monitoring report.	24 September 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
16.	Award of Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014 to 2017 to Council Housing Properties -	To award the Contract to the preferred contractor for this service.	24 September 2013		Report with exempt appendices	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Basil Quinn, Housing Asset Manager Performance or Peter Joslin, Housing Asset Manager Email: basil.quinn@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5118 or peter.joslin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5395

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
17.	Award of Preferred Bidder status to the selected contractor under the BEaR Project -	The report will be seeking the Executive to endorse the selection of the preferred bidder made by the BEaR Project Board to allow the Project Team to finalise and award the Contract.	24 September 2013	Consultees and dates to be confirmed, however this item will go through Overview and Scrutiny at the beginning of September.	A full report and presentation will be provided alongside the Executive report.	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Ben Finlayson, BEaR Project Manager Email: ben.finlayson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6277

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
18.	Central Bedfordshire's Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Duties -	To approve a local flood risk strategy for Central Bedfordshire and to create a Sustainable Urban Drainage Advisory Board.	5 November 2013	<p>CBC is required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The draft strategy will be subject to public consultation. Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the draft strategy and the public consultation response to the strategy in August/September 2013.</p> <p>Following Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs confirmation of the mandatory sustainable drainage application processes, CBC will also be required to establish a SUDS Approval Board to evaluate, approve and adopt suitable SUDS measures for all new developments.</p>	Summary of Flood and Water Management Act Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	<p>Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 04/10/13 to Contact Officer: Iain Finnigan, Senior Engineer - Policy and Flood Risk Management Email: iain.finnigan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4351</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
19.	Leisure Strategy -	To adopt Leisure Strategy: Chapter 2 - Recreation & Open Space Strategy, Chapter 3 - Playing Pitch Strategy, Overarching Leisure Strategy. All for adoption prior to Supplementary Planning Document formal consultation.	5 November 2013	All Member Presentation of Draft Strategies on 10 July 2013. Draft Strategies to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 September 2013.	Chapter 2: Recreation & Open Space Strategy Chapter 3: Playing Pitch Strategy Overarching Leisure Strategy Document	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 04/10/13 to Contact Officer: Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services Email: jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4258

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
20.	Proposals for Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation in September 2015 and Proposals for Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation in September 2016 -	1) Determination of proposals for commissioning of new school places for implementation in September 2015; and 2) to approve commencement of consultations for proposals for commissioning of new school places for implementation in September 2016.	10 December 2013	<p>For proposals for New School Places for implementation in September 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the governing body of the schools which are the subject of proposals; • families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the schools; • the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected; • families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals including families of pupils at feeder schools; • trade unions who represent staff at the schools and representatives of trade unions of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals; • Constituency MPs for the schools that are the subject of the proposals; • the local parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposals is situated <p>Consultation period between May and November 2013 including press releases, public meetings, statutory notices.</p>	Report and Outcome of Consultation	<p>Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning Email: rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5572</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
21.	Draft Capital Programme - 2014/15 to 2017/18 -	To consider the draft Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2017/18.	10 December 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
22.	Draft Revenue Budget 2014/15 -	To consider the draft revenue budget for 2014/15.	10 December 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
23.	Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15 -	To consider the draft Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15.	10 December 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
24.	Draft Fees and Charges 2014/15 -	To consider the draft Fees and Charges for 2014/15.	10 December 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
25.	Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Quarter 2 Budget Monitor Reports -	To consider the revenue, capital and HRA quarter 2 budget monitoring report.	10 December 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
26.	Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Reports -	To consider the revenue, capital and HRA quarter 3 budget monitoring report.	18 March 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 17/03/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
NON KEY DECISIONS						
27.	Quarter 4 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 4 performance report.	25 June 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 24/05/13 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517
28.	Minerals and Waste Core Strategy -	To recommend to Council the adoption of the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.	13 August 2013	A wide range of stakeholders were involved in consultations undertaken from 2006 to 2012, using methods which include an internet portal, deposit of hard copies at points of presence, and displaying the Core Strategy on the Council website. Consultees included the Parish Councils, statutory bodies, special interest groups, minerals industry, waste management industry, and individuals who had expressed an interest at previous consultations.	Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and the Inspector's report following the Examination in public.	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 12/07/13 to Contact Officer: Roy Romans, Minerals and Waste Team Leader Email: roy.romans@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6039

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
29.	Quarter 1 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 1 performance report.	24 September 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 23/08/13 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517
30.	Quarter 2 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 2 performance report.	10 December 2013		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517
31.	Capital Programme - 2014/15 to 2017/18 -	To recommend to Council the proposed Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2017/18 for approval.	4 February 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
32.	Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2014-2018 -	To recommend to Council the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2014-2018 for approval.	4 February 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
33.	Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 - 2017/18 -	To recommend to Council the Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 - 2017/18 for approval.	4 February 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
34.	Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15 -	To recommend to Council the Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15 for approval.	4 February 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
35.	Fees and Charges 2014/15 -	To recommend to Council the Fees and Charges 2014/15 for approval.	4 February 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
36.	Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities -	To recommend to Council to approve the Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities for 2014 - 2015.	18 March 2014	Strategic Assessment & Partnership Plan will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership Executive, the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Local Strategic Partnership.	Strategic Assessment Priorities & Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014 - 2015	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer: Joy Craven, CSP Manager Email: joy.craven@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4649

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
37.	Quarter 3 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 3 performance report.	18 March 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517

Postal address for Contact Officers: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ

**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Decisions on Key Issues**

For the Municipal Year 2012/13 the Forward Plan will be published on the thirtieth day of each month or, where the thirtieth day is not a working day, the working day immediately proceeding the thirtieth day, or in February 2013 when the plan will be published on the twenty-eighth day:

Date of Publication	Period of Plan
02.04.13	1 May 2013 – 30 April 2014
01.05.13	1 June 2013 – 31 May 2014
31.05.13	1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014
02.07.13	1 August 2013 – 31 July 2014
01.08.13	1 September 2013 – 31 August 2014
30.08.13	1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014
02.10.13	1 November 2013 – 31 October 2014
31.10.13	1 December 2013 – 30 November 2014
28.11.13	1 January 2014 – 31 December 2014
02.01.14	1 February 2014 – 31 January 2015
30.01.14	1 March 2014 – 28 February 2015
28.02.14	1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015